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THURSDAY
DECEMBER 30, 1954

Windy, sunny, clear and invigorating.

Livy Merchant telephoned me at 9:00 o'clock from Washington asking if I thought it might be constructive for the President to refer today to the Communist agitation in Paris against the ratification of the accords. My answer was no -- this would not assist the proponents and would be seized upon by opponents as another instance of U. S. hectoring. I thought ratification would take place by a narrow margin, since Mendès' enemies would prefer not to overthrow him on this issue but to pin responsibility on him for German rearmament.

We went to Charlotte Court House at 11:00 a.m. to see the Chermsides. The town council, in the name of "progress", has had the beautiful shade trees on either side of the main street chopped down. Cherm successfully managed to stave off the proposed incision in the public library garden of a pie-shaped parking lot.

Cherm seemed depressed. A marvelous man. He will be 76 on January 21st. Daisy has suffered for some years from intermittent but acute heart attacks. He told me his first cousin, Michael Wright, whom I know well, has been shifted from Oslo to Baghdad as British Ambassador.

At noon we put on the radio and received a report that the French Parliament, according to unofficial figures, had ratified the accords by 18 votes, in a count of 286 to 268. A narrow squeak.

Later returns conveyed the news of a majority of 27 -- far from "the large national majority" that Mendès, when as Cock Robin he killed EDC, said would be necessary in sponsorship of German rearmament. Had the situation been reversed, namely a vote first taken on the present bill, it would have been defeated, and, with Government backing, EDC would easily have passed. But there is no use repining -- this arrangement is agreeable to most Americans and British;

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France is the big loser, having forfeited the proffered leadership of Europe -- a silver platter gift from Western Germany, guaranteed for fifty years -- and having now taken the first step in acceptance of the reconstitution of a German national army and a German general staff.

Foster called me tonight to express his relief at the result. He said an editorial had appeared in this morning's Washington Post to the effect I was resigning and therefore there would be no more bipartisanship in foreign affairs. I shall probably never read this summary and foolish estimate, since we are completely cut off here from access to any newspapers. They are impossible to purchase even in our emporium of Brookneal.

This afternoon, in the course of a walk over Brookland, an outlying portion of the place, Brucie laboriously ferreted out a covey of partridges. I had one shot, and that successful. The enthusiastic little fellow retrieved the bird in beautiful style. I lingered late in the lowgrounds next a pond supposedly frequented by ducks but, nothing appearing, walked home in delicious moonlight under a canopy of stars, in air as fresh and soft as springtime.

Telegrams, to my dudgeon, are pouring in, especially concerned with future dinners in Washington. After Paris' frying pan, we seem fated to sizzle in the Capital.

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